

Health Awareness



Tips On Maintaining Healthy Levels Of Vitamin D

(NAPSA)—Anytime of year can be the right time to make sure you are getting enough of the “sunshine vitamin”—vitamin D.

Vitamin D not only helps maintain strong bones and calcium levels in the blood, but there is growing evidence linking this important nutrient to overall good health. In fact, if you are among the 77 percent of American adults who are vitamin D deficient, research shows you may be at an increased risk for rickets, osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, autoimmune disease and certain types of cancer.

To help, here are four tips to help you achieve and maintain healthy vitamin D levels:

1. Know your number. A simple blood test ordered by your physician can assess your vitamin D sufficiency level compared to federally recommended guidelines. Some tests even help doctors obtain a more accurate, reliable measurement of your total vitamin D level, which looks at the two most important forms of vitamin D to humans: D₂, which is found in plants, and D₃, which is produced in human skin when it's exposed to sunlight.

By knowing your total vitamin D number, you and your physician can develop a plan to help you maintain healthy vitamin D levels.

2. Get some sun. Sun exposure plays a crucial role in the daily production of vitamin D. However, too much unprotected exposure increases the risk of skin



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cancer. Research finds that as little as 10 minutes of direct sunlight a day in certain populations can help to prevent deficiencies.

3. Eat right. Regularly eating foods rich in vitamin D such as salmon, canned tuna fish in oil, white mushrooms, carrots, dark leafy greens and fortified brands of milk, juices, and cereal products helps maintain adequate levels.

4. Consider supplements. Taking daily vitamin D supplements is another way to help maintain adequate amounts. Your doctor can help you determine which supplement type and amount is right for you.

As always, check with your doctor before making any significant changes to your lifestyle or diet.

For more information on vitamin D, vitamin D deficiency and the importance of measuring total vitamin D levels, visit www.siemens.com/VitaminD.